

Testimony Presented to the Environment Committee  
March 10, 2023

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CT Votes for Animals

Testimony  
**opposing Section 2 of Senate Bill 1148**

AA Authorizing Certain Killing and Hunting of Black Bear and Prohibiting Bird Feeders and Other Unintentional and Intentional Feeding of Potentially Dangerous Animals

**And opposing Senate Bill 1149**

AA Eliminating All Restrictions for Sunday Hunting on Public and Private Property

Senator Lopes, Representative Gresko and distinguished members of the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony **opposing** Section 2 of Senate Bill 1148 AA Authorizing Certain Killing and Hunting of Black Bear and Prohibiting Bird Feeders and Other Unintentional and Intentional Feeding of Potentially Dangerous Animals And **opposing** Senate Bill 1149 AA Eliminating All Restrictions for Sunday Hunting on Public and Private Property

Section 2 of SB 1148 would establish an annual bear hunt season in Litchfield County to kill fifty bears. Please do not support this provision. Bears are opportunistic feeders, and they are not interested in us. Bears deep in the woods – the target of a hunt – are not the bears causing concerns. In fact, there is evidence that hunting bears is counter-productive as a means of reducing human-bear conflicts. A recent extensive study<sup>i</sup>, utilizing data from 2004 through 2019, concluded that the most effective way to manage bear and human interactions is through coexistence and proper management of attractants.

The study demonstrated that after establishing a new hunting season there was no reduction in interactions or incidents, and these were higher in areas with the new hunting season relative to control areas. Human-bear interactions and incidents were strongly related to the availability of natural foods in all analyses. Regulated hunting was ineffective at reducing human-bear interactions and incidents in the near-term and might have increased both. The results support a long history of research showing that natural food availability is a primary driver of human-wildlife conflict. Programs promoting coexistence between people and wildlife, including education and management of unnatural food sources are likely to be the most successful at reducing conflicts between people and bears.

Please support humane resolutions to conflicts with wildlife – not Section 2 of SB 1148 which is the opposite.

Senate Bill 1149 would eliminate all restrictions for hunting on Sundays. Please continue to give animals, and humans who like to enjoy nature, a break from killing on one day a week in Connecticut and do not act favorably on this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to you regarding my significant concerns with both of these bills.

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<sup>i</sup> Northrup, J. M., Howe, E., Inglis, J., Newton, E., Obbard, M. E., Pond, B., and Potter, D.. 2023. Experimental test of the efficacy of hunting for controlling human-wildlife conflict. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 22363. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jwmg.22363>